

Amy Lacy

From: Jill Rezek <jillrezek@outlook.com>
Sent: Thursday, April 7, 2022 8:28 PM
To: Amy Lacy
Subject: Historic Preservation Commission Ordinance

Amy and Councilors:

My name is Jill Rezek and I live at 90 North 5th Street, near the Hussey Mayfield Library. We have been in our circa 1903 home for over 10 years. Prior to that, we lived in Rock Bridge for five years, having moved there from Woodruff Place on the east side of downtown Indianapolis.

Although Rock Bridge was and is a lovely neighborhood, we found that we missed old house living and the architectural and historic diversity of an older neighborhood. People take pride in being the guardians of a home that has history. It's not just about the architecture, you could reproduce that in the Village of West Clay. It is the preservation of history while still living in the 21st century. Driving through the Village you will find examples of homes from the very beginning of Zionsville to mid-century. It is one of the few places, if not the only, in Zionsville where small cottages and grand Victorians co-exist. That creates a multi-generational neighborhood with some relative socio-economic diversity.

The Village is the hallmark of Zionsville. We are the brochure image. We are the character of our town and we literally house the difference between Zionsville and other suburbs. We are both a destination and a neighborhood. I regularly watch people walk, drive, photograph, and paint throughout my neighborhood and I love it. Once this is gone, it's gone forever.

When we lived in Woodruff Place, we were under the watchful eye of the Indiana Historic Preservation Commission. We couldn't touch the outside of our home without a certificate of historical appropriateness, and those were not easy to get. The measures proposed to create a Historic Preservation Commission Ordinance are nothing like this and not an undue burden to the homeowners. It's about blending, not freezing in time. If there is a spectrum to historic conservation, this is at the light end.

What we are in favor of is some oversight to protect our historic properties and encourage appropriate new construction. This leaves the residents free to do things like choose their own paint colors and conduct renovations while keeping smaller homes from being torn down and replaced unnecessarily. Not all homes can be saved, and not all should be. But there should be a thoughtful and fair process. Almost all neighborhoods have some kind of standard to preserve a sense of place. Building homes that do not blend with the existing structures changes the historic feel, the natural light their neighbors enjoy, and the drainage.

In recent years, homes have been approved that are built up to the lot lines and tower over their neighbors. While the town has worked to improve the drainage over the last year or two (thank you!) it is still a real concern and should be considered.

We wholeheartedly support the establishment of ordinance and ask you to do the same.

Sincerely,
Jill Rezek